Ms. Mary McGrory
Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20071

1/9/85

Dear Ms. McGrory,

May I suggest some rethinking of the conclusion of today's column? "The answer to terrorism is ...political." I suggest instead, in the context of your use, "The end to terrorism is political." Today, in that part of the world, no political solution is possible because too many Arabs simply will not accept any political solution and for years haven't.

You also quote Qaddafi, "You must solve the Palestinian problem if you want peace and to bring an end to these actions," Arab terorism. Do you think that he and you agree on what might "solve the Palestinian problem?" I do not, not only from his record but from an accidental social meeting with one of his operatives in the U.S., under an embassy cover, about 15 years ago.

Forgetting a very long history for a moment, no Arab power recognized the UN's 1947 decision approving a State of Israel and just about all went to war instead, more than once, as you'll recall. Abdullah started talking peace to the Israelis and was promptly assassinated. Sadat signed a peace treaty and did not long survive it. Arafat merely mentioned the word "Israel" and some of his own tried to assassinate him for that. And as of today, only Egypt recognizes the existence of the State of Israel. I doubt if many Arab rulers believe they can survive recognition under any conditions. But if all the Arab powers were to recognize Israel, which would require that they all be satisfied politically, that would not end Arab terrorism and it might well, given the clear history, mean still more terrorism, ~~against~~ AGAINST those who recognized Israel.

For Qaddafi and the more militant Arabs, solving the Palestinian problem means another holocaust. Nothing else will satisfy them. The intensity of this feeling is beyond belief, probably more so now than when I had personal experience with it.

My last daily reporting (and my only radio reporting) was as news and special events editor of WGMS when it was WQQW. My last day was the day of the 1948 election. Mostly I rewrote AP copy. Impartial reporting of events in the 1948 war infuriated people in the Arab embassies and they called to complain regularly. As regularly I offered them time and without a single exception not one accepted that offer. Their complaint was really their inability to live with the reality they detested, the mere establishment of the State of Israel.

Are you old enough to remember that the Jordanian army was then financed by Great Britain and led by the British General Glubb? And that Jordan is really Trans-Jordan, so named then because it was the part of Palestine on the other side of the Jordan? It was a general understanding at the time the British established that state with that larger part of the Palestine territory it took from the Turkish empire at the end of World War I that what remained would be the Jewish state? Or that it gave some of the Golan area to Syria then? I enclose a map from the Jerusalem Post that indicates some of these things. (a British source in

The whole thing is enormously complicated, made much more so right after World War II when the Grand Mufti returned from spending that war in Berlin helping Hitler as best he could to attempt to drive all Jews out of the holy land. There are many legitimate claims that can be made but not all can be realized. Even Syria can base a claim going back to the pre-Christian era, if you know the reason for the Chanukah holiday. It held that territory and its king demanded heavy taxes and that he be worshipped. The Jews were willing to pay those taxes but they refused to worship him. The Maccabees, probably the first great civilian warriors, against great odds, defeated him and preserved monotheism.

What is now referred to as the West Bank and is Judea and Samaria, was taken by Jordan by force of arms, which is never mentioned. Certainly conflicting claims can be made for that rather small portion of land, but without question it is the place from which all Jews come and to many that is a legitimate claim.

Again, please do not feel that you must take time to reply. Unless I know more that might interest you about the past. My only purpose is to ask you to think, in the "reality" context of your column, about whether you were really dealing with reality, about the "answer" to terrorism (and I don't pretend to have one) and about what Gaddafi was really talking about.

Best regrds,

Harold Weisberg

PARTITIONIN

By AHARO

NRY KISSINGER expressed longing of those perplexed by Arab-Israel dispute and its orical legacy when in 1973 he nounced majestically: "The past ad." But as the article "Is Jor- Really Palestine?" (*Jerusalem* — 17 June) reconfirms, the past ill very much with us. Bernard serstein is correct in noting that nany aspects of the conflict ain of "more than merely anti- ian interest." The historical d, therefore, cannot be dis- d; nor should it be dealt with narily or bent to serve one's .

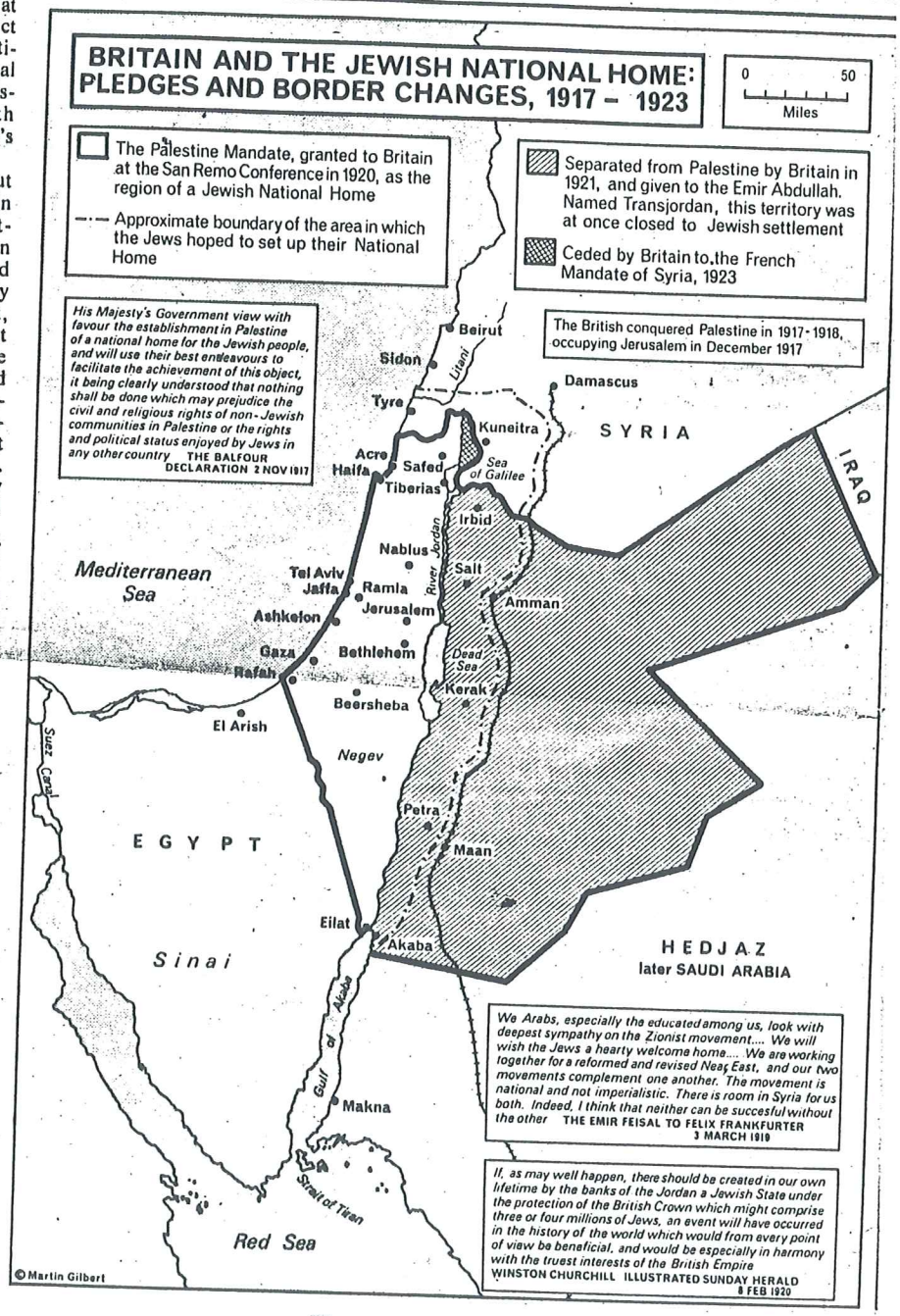
rhaps nowhere is this borne out than in the historical links in rst quarter of this century bet- Cisjordania or "western tine" on the one hand, and jordan on the other. Precisely se this relationship — past, nt and future — of the West of the Jordan River to the ank is at once so relevant and o little researched and un- od, it deserves a more objec- nd comprehensive treatment hat provided by Wasserstein.

criticism stems primarily is having confused historical otion with political advocacy. ing upon himself the task of ring the "popular myth" that is Palestine, Wasserstein is an thorough in answering Jordan in fact ever was e.

ther due to space limitations cause of his ideological osition, made explicit only in ticle's final sentence, the abandons the historian's marshalling evidence selec- nd by channelling it toward ted viewpoint. Especially g is his conclusion that , not even the facts, should n the way of the Israeli- an agreement he prefers and "must surely become the objective" of Israeli foreign

ER meritorious this goal e for Wasserstein and ow can he justify dismissing vant, contrary or untidy a dy of historical material ndicates Palestine and dan were initially perceived ot merely by a fringe ele- Jewish nationalists but by nn, Ben-Gurion and m Zionists — as a single al entity? Our concern sequently, is not whether emite Kingdom of Jordan r will be Palestine, but t at a critical point it was ed, making its separation in the years 1921-1922 an tition.

ftermath of World War I issolution of the Ottoman



The maps above are taken from 'The Arab-Israeli C

contenders. Their memorandum to the Paris Peace Conference states unequivocally that the proposed eastern boundary of Palestine

vantage to those like Abdullah who were more purposive. Disproving the image of Great Powers as wholly rational and calculating

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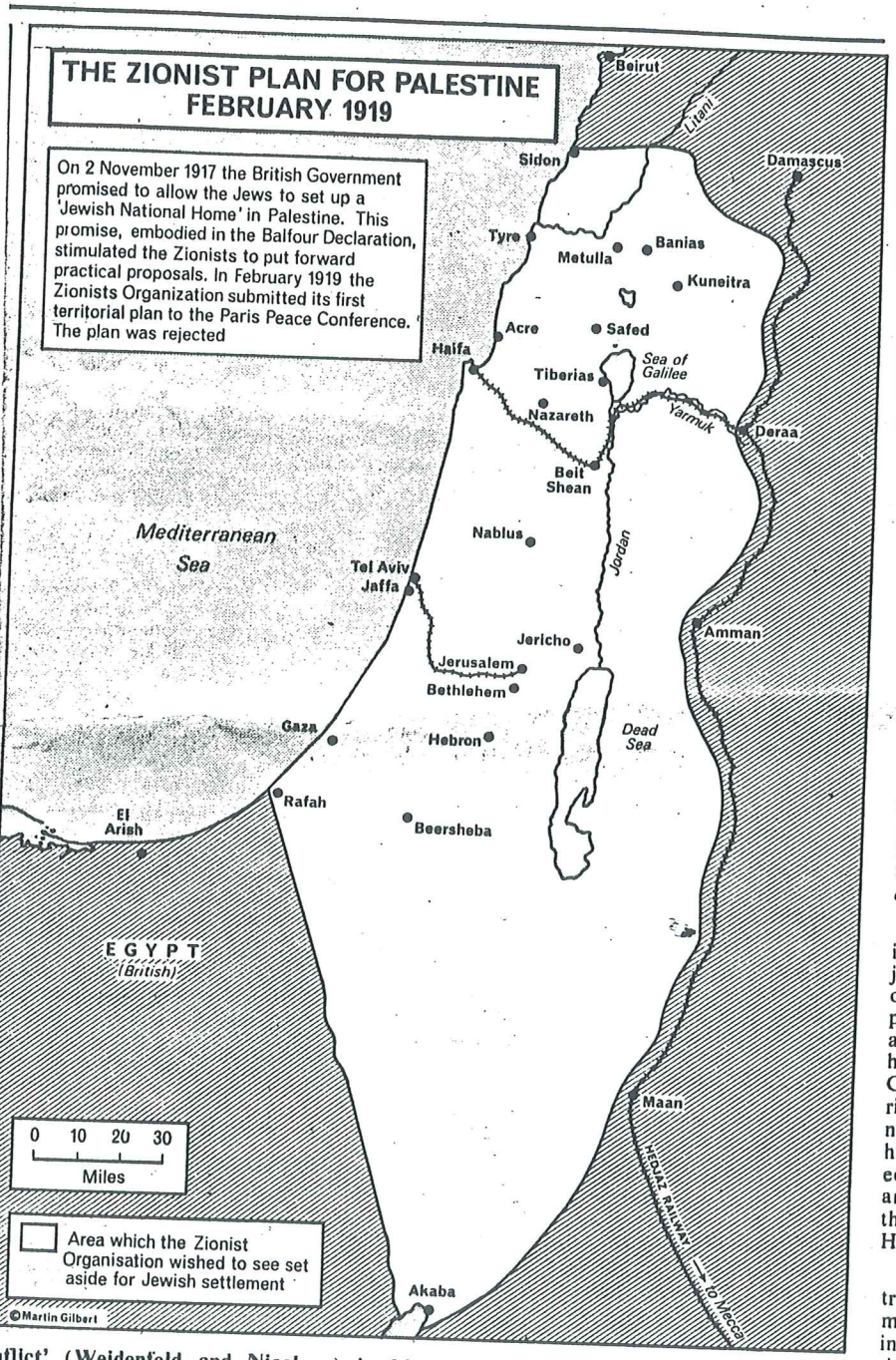

nflict' (Weidenfeld and Nicolson) by Martin Gilbert.

that the second
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Whitehall, the impulsive defender of British Empire and honour in one fell stroke had: precluded French expansion southward from Syria in

Palestine proper. The Zionists, from their nationalist perspective, were to be the chief losers in this initial

which stipulated that in effect Jewish land purchase, immigration and residence would not be permitted in "the territories lying *between* the Jordan and the *eastern boundary of Palestine* as *ultimately determined*"?

IF FURTHER proof were needed of Transjordan's initial inclusion in Palestine, one might take due note of the 1937 Palestine Royal Commission report. For one thing it described Article 25 as having defined the limits of "that part of Palestine which was known as Trans-Jordan." The report went further. In proposing that partition alone offered "the inestimable boon of peace," it took due note of those people who might feel an instinctive dislike for cutting up the Holy Land since they thought the "severance" of Trans-Jordan from historic Palestine was bad enough.

What better confession of error and indirect criticism of Churchill's impulsive action in 1921 by a prestigious British commission does one require than the Peel Commission's recommendation that Transjordan be reincorporated into Palestine to achieve a more just and durable repartitioning of the troubled country?

As to why the Zionists remained silent at the times Transjordan was first separated, the answer lies in the condition then prevalent in 1921. Zionist pragmatism stressed efforts on the West Bank at the initial stage rather than spreading themselves thin. The other reason is that nobody at the time comprehended fully the long-term implications of the Churchill-Abdullah *modus operandi*.

Writing to the colonial secretary in March, 1921, Weizmann saw justification for a possible division of the country for administrative purposes into two parts — Western and Eastern Palestine. Still, he hastened to add that "the fields of Gilead, Moab and Edom, with the rivers Arnon and Jabbock, to say nothing of the Yarmuk...are historically and geographically and economically linked to Palestine, and that it is upon these fields...that the success of the Jewish National Home must largely rest."

These are the words not of an extremist but of the moderate Weizmann himself; they were written not in 1983 but in 1921. They confirm that from a Zionist perspective what transpired in Transjordan, far from being a "myth of partition," was a harsh reality to be overcome thereafter by redoubling efforts to the west of the Jordan.